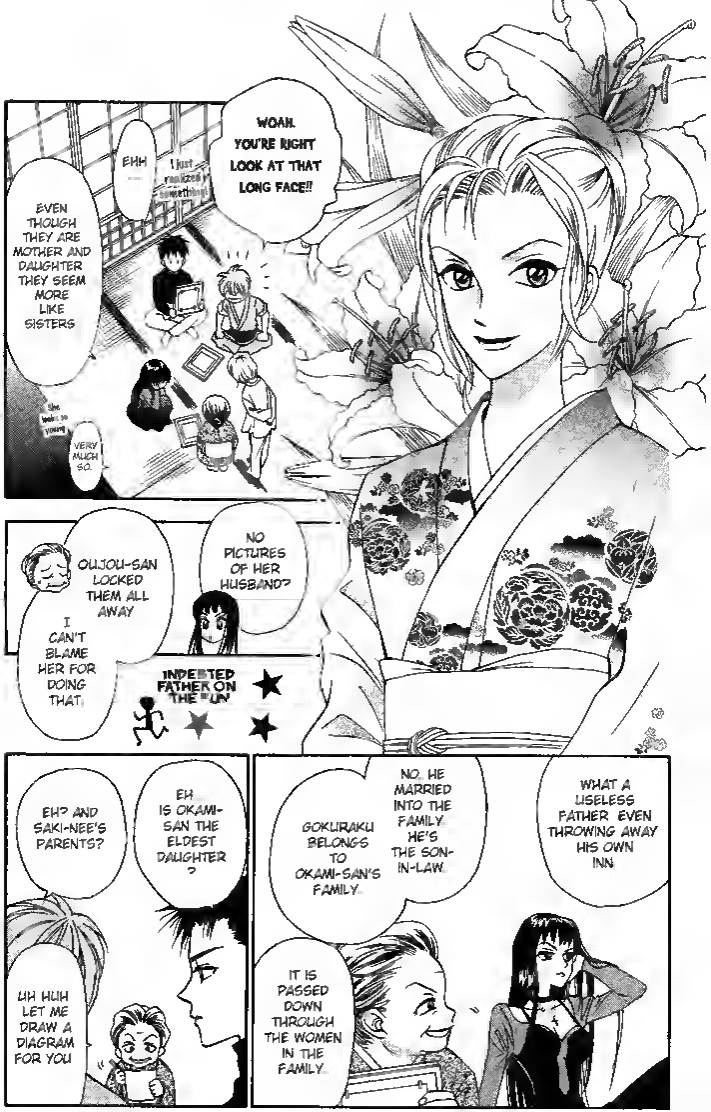
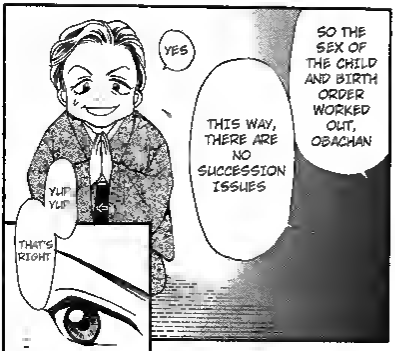
" BECAUSE OF YOUR MOTHER AND THE INN, YOU MADE THE DECISION NOT TO FALL IN LOVE I UNDERSTAND
WHEN THAT DAY COMES AND YOU FEEL YOU ARE READY,
I WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU. "
THAT DAY ...

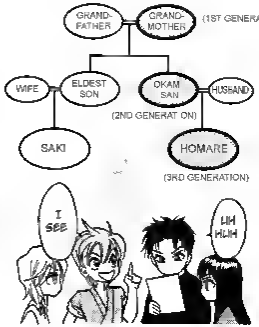
EVEN THOUGH OTO-CHAN SAID THIS TO ME..
Hello, Ootori-san
Hi.
205
WHAT DID HE MEAN WHEN HE SAID "UNTIL YOUR MOTHER IS RELEASED FROM THE HOSPITAL"?
OKAA-SAN
YOU STILL CAN'T HEAR ME
.....

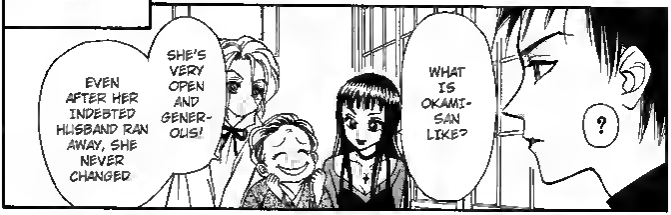
THERE IS NOTHING ELSE I DARE TO THINK ABOUT.
I NEVER WANT TO LET GO OF THESE HANDS.
BUT AT THIS TIME ...

SFX [go go go go] MENACING ATMOSPHERE
ゴゴゴゴゴ
AS I SAID
THIS MATTER WAS DECIDED AGES AGO, RIGHT?
DUNNO
WHO IS YAYOI-SAN?
WHO IS SAKI-NEE TALKING TO?
I SEE
IT'S OKAMI-SAN BUT SHE IS STILL IN THE HOSPITAL
SHE IS STILL VERY YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL
HERE, LOOK!!
ビュオオオオ
[GOKURAKU] BELONGS TO YAYOI-SAN.
HO HO HO
AND WHAT ABOUT IT?
……
RUSTLE/
RUSTLE~
SFX [hyu goon]HOWLING WINTER WIND

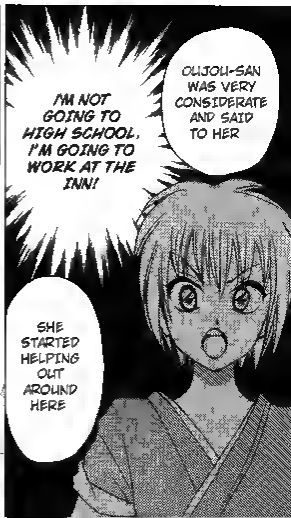

WOAH. YOU'RE RIGHT LOOK AT THAT LONG FACE!!
EHH
I just realized something
EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE MOTHER AND DAUGHTER THEY SEEM MORE LIKE SISTERS
She looks so young
VERY MUCH SO.
NO PICTURES OF HER HUSBAND?
OUJOU-SAN LOCKED THEM ALL AWAY
I CAN'T BLAME HER FOR DOING THAT.
INDEBTED FATHER ON THE RUN
EH? AND SAKI-NEE'S PARENTS?
EH IS OKAMI-SAN THE ELDEST DAUGHTER ?
UH HUH LET ME DRAW A DIAGRAM FOR YOU
GOKURAKU BELONGS TO OKAMI-SAN'S FAMILY.
NO. HE MARRIED INTO THE FAMILY. HE'S THE SON-IN-LAW.
WHAT A USELESS FATHER EVEN THROWING AWAY HIS OWN INN
IT IS PASSED DOWN THROUGH THE WOMEN IN THE FAMILY.

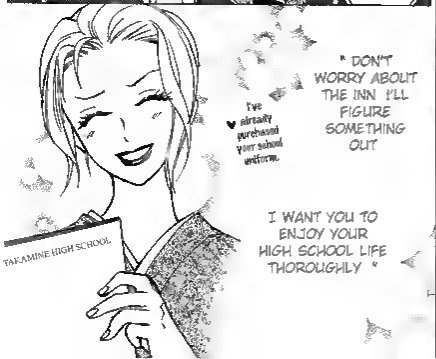

SO THE SEX OF THE CHILD AND BIRTH ORDER WORKED OUT, OBACHAN
YES
THIS WAY, THERE ARE NO SUCCESSION ISSUES
YUP YUP
THAT'S RIGHT


GRAND-FATHER
GRAND-MOTHER
(1ST GENERATION
WIFE
ELDEST SON
OKAMI SAN
HUSBAND
(2ND GENERATION)
SAKI
HOMARE
(3RD GENERATION)
I SEE
UH HUH


WHAT IS OKAMI-SAN LIKE?
?
SHE'S VERY OPEN AND GENER-OUS!
EVEN AFTER HER INDEBTED HUSBAND RAN AWAY, SHE NEVER CHANGED

SHE REALLY LIKES TO TEASE PEOPLE
That's not what I meant!
What? a scary child
YOU WANT TO FIGHT ME OVER THE OKAMI-SAN TITLE!?


I'M NOT GOING TO HIGH SCHOOL, I'M GOING TO WORK AT THE INN!
OUJOU-SAN WAS VERY CONSIDERATE AND SAID TO HER
SHE STARTED HELPING OUT AROUND HERE


TAKAMINE HIGH SCHOOL
I've already purchased your school uniform.
" DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE INN I'LL FIGURE SOMETHING OUT
I WANT YOU TO ENJOY YOUR HIGH SCHOOL LIFE THOROUGHLY "

EVEN THOUGH OKAMI-SAN ATTENDED TAKAMINE HIGH WHEN SHE WAS YOUNG
SHE NEVER GRADUATED
DUE TO FAMILY PROBLEMS
OKAMI-SAN WORKED DAY AND NIGHT
WORKED
AND WORKED
WE NEVER ANTICIPATED
THAT FOUR MONTHS AGO SHE WOULD COLLAPSE WHILE OUT
SHE WORKED HERSELF TO EXHAUSTION
AND EVEN THOUGH SHE IS ONLY 38, SHE SUFFERED A STROKE
OUJOU-SAN KNEW THIS
AND STUDIED HARD IN HOPES OF MAKING HER MOTHER'S DREAMS COME TRUE.

SOON CUSTOMERS STOPPED COMING
THE DEBT COLLECTORS BECAME MERCILESS
THEY USED DESPICABLE METHODS TO GET THEIR MONEY EVEN WE WERE NOT SPARED
GET OUT!
THIS IS MY MOTHER'S HOUSE!
OUJOU-SAN IS INTENTLY WAITING FOR HER MOTHER TO LEAVE THE HOSPITAL AND COME HOME.
THIS IS BASED ON THEIR DECISION.
WHILE WEARING HER TAKAMINE HIGH SCHOOL UNIFORM
OKAMI-SAN WOULD GET BETTER SOON
IF ONLY...

Author's Chat

In the end, this is the most time I've spent drawing. It ended taking an astronomical number of days! The original drawings took 7-7 1/2 days. The final draft, 5-9 days. All the chapters seem to take this long. After a while, I felt like getting mad at myself. I had only 2 weeks, what was I doing!! Although, I feel that this is the best work I've produced. Particularly, Volume 4. It was heroically miserable.

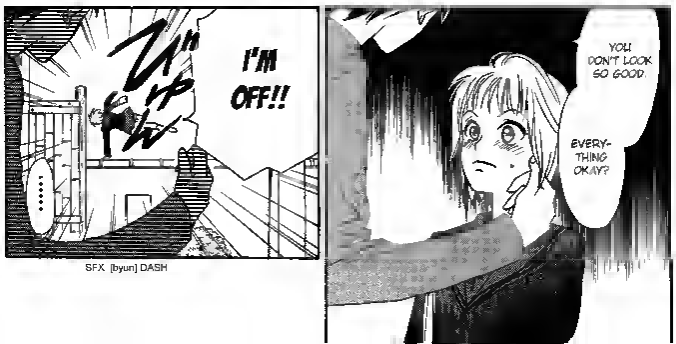
Now that a few years have passed, I sometimes ask myself (what were you drawing back then?). At that time, while I was drawing, I thought (It's beautiful!) But now I wonder (How could I have drawn that?). Sometimes it would make me feel depressed all day long. I think other mangakas can understand this. (laugh)

I EVEN GOT A CALL DURING LUNCH
HOW VERY THOROUGH OF HER
TOSHIKO-OBACHAN
I'VE READ THE LETTER
SHE HASN'T GIVEN UP
AND IS STOOPING TO HER USUAL LOW WAYS
TEAR
HEY, HEY
I DON'T CARE IF YOU TEAR IT UP BUT DON'T LITTER OUTSIDE
RATTLE RATTLE
DOES ANYONE ELSE KNOW ABOUT THIS?
I HAVEN'T SAID ANYTHING YET.
THIS IS OOTORI FAMILY BUSINESS
IT WOULD BE STRANGE TO TELL THEM ABOUT IT.
I WILL DO MY BEST TO CONTINUE HERE, BUT...

I DON'T INTEND TO RESPOND TO ANYONE...
WHO'D WRITE THIS KIND OF LETTER.
YOU SHOULD LET IT GO TOO, HOMARE.
SHE'S RIGHT. GETTING ANGRY IS EXACTLY WHAT THAT WOMAN WANTS.
I MUST DO MY BEST TO PROTECT IT!!
AAA~
AGAIN, NO CUSTOMERS TODAY.
OKAASAN STILL OWNS THE INN.
and it's dusk, too.
store

LUNCH TIME
OK
SHINE
.....?
TOSS
SHINE
beep beep beep
BAM
JANK
clip
clip
PU

HEY, I'M GOING TO THE HOSPITAL FOR A WHILE
FWIP
I'LL LEAVE THE REST TO YOU GUYS
(S BULK FLESH)
I WONDER IF OKAMI-SAN WILL EVER GET THE CHANCE OF SEEING HOMARE IN HER UNIFORM
WHAT SORT OF BAD OMEN ARE YOU TRYING TO CAST?
She will wake up!
WHAM
GOOD LUCK OUJOU-SAN!
OUJOU-SAN, BE CARE-FUL!



SFX [byun] DASH

IS EVERYTHING OKAY?

BE CAREFUL!

IT'D BE GOOD IF SHE WOKE UP SOON.

OPEN
I SHOULD TRY TO BE HAPPIER
OKAASAN, I'M HERE...
.....
EH? IT'S A LETTER TO HOMARE!
Ehhh~ well? well?
Hey!
WHATCHA UP TO, IKOLIMA-YAN?
Sounds like an accurate description
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE CALLING IT A "PUZZLE"...
PUZZLE
Tiny pieces of paper~!!
FINISHED
WHAT IS IT? A LETTER?

"IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE WE LAST MET. ARE YOU WELL?"
WHO IS IT?
DON'T KNOW
WE SHOULD NOT READ IT
SOME PIECES ARE MISSING
AH
"REGARDING THE DIVISION OF INHERITANCE, LET'S FIND SOME TIME TO TALK ABOUT IT AGAIN SOON."
....?
INHERITANCE
IS IT THE KIND OF INHERITANCE WHERE THE ELDEST DECIDES HOW TO DIVIDE AMONGST THE FAMILY MEMBERS?
BUT, ISN'T THAT DONE AFTER THE ELDEST HAS DIED?
AND OKAMI-SAN IS STILL ALIVE
HAAA !?

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? THIS LETTER IS MEAN-SPIRITED AND MAKING TROUBLE!!
IT'S TOO MUCH. THIS WAS DONE INTENTION-ALLY!?
WHO SENT THIS LETTER!?
"YOU SHOULDN'T GO OUT OF YOUR WAY TO RESUSCITATE HER..."
HAAA...
THIS IS OKAMI-SAN'S OLDER SISTER.
HOMARE'S AUNT...
My aunt too.
OUR AUNT HATES TO WORK
IT SEEMS SHE LANDED HERSELF A MILLIONAIRE AND LEFT THIS FAMILY 30 YEARS AGO UNDERSTANDABLY, SHE ALSO RELINQUISHED HER INHERITANCE OF THE INN.
UNDER FALSE PRE-TENSES,
THIS IS WHAT OUR FAMILY TREE REALLY LOOKS LIKE
ACTUALLY
SHE IS THE YOUNGEST DAUGHTER
OKAMI-SAN ISN'T THE ELDEST?
GRAND-FATHER
GRAND-MOTHER
(1ST GENERATION)
AUNT (51)
ELDEST SON (48)
OKAMI SAN (31)
(2ND GENERATION)
SON
SON
SAKI (28)
HOMARE (15)
(3RD GENERATION)

SAKI, I HEAR YOU ARE HELPING THEM.
BUT THE INN DOESN'T BELONG TO YOU, RIGHT?
THE NERVE OF HER! SAYING THAT IT "DOESN'T BELONG TO YOU"!
SHE REAPPEARED AT THE FAMILY HOME AFTER OUR GRANDMOTHER DIED, 10 YEARS AGO
BUT AFTER LEARNING OF THE DEBT SHE STARTED TRYING TO GET CLOSER AGAIN
BUT WHEN HER LITTLE SISTER FELL ILL, CARRYING ALL THAT DEBT, OUR AUNT DIDN'T CARE IF SHE LIVED OR DIED.
COME AND SEE US AGAIN, ONEE CHAN.
SHE DOESN'T WANT TO RUIN GOKURAKU.
IT SEEMS CONTRA-DICTORY
It's a lot of work, isn't it?
IF SHE HATES WORKING, WHY DOES SHE WANT TO BECOME OKAMI-SAN?
SHE WANTS THE LAND IT SITS ON.

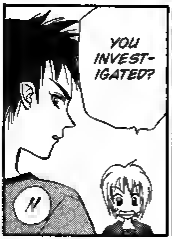
HOW CAN YOU TALK SO RUDELY TO YOUR AUNT, HOMARE?
I CAME HERE TO SEE MY LITTLE SISTER.
OH YES, DID YOU READ MY LETTER?
WHAT DID YOU COME HERE FOR!?
PLEASE LEAVE!
DON'T COME HERE ANYMORE -!!
SLASH
THE ONE WHO'S CRUEL IS YOU. MY MOTHER IS STILL ALIVE
AND YET YOU DARE WRITE A LETTER LIKE THAT. IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE!
CALM DOWN
ARA, HOW CRUEL
I TORE IT UP AND THREW IT OUT
OF COURSE, IT'S BETTER IF WE CLEAR EVERYTHING UP EARLY ON.
THUMP
WHO KNOWS WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN, RIGHT?
IT'S JUST SPECULATION

YOU, MY BROTHER AND I, CAN EVENLY SPLIT THE INHERITANCE AND THE LAND IT SITS ON.
!?
DON'T WORRY. I WON'T ASK FOR ALL OF THE INHERITANCE
EVEN NOW, I STILL HAVE NO DESIRE TO BECOME OKAMI-SAN.
HUH!?
THE WAY I SEE IT, ISN'T IT BEST TO CLOSE UP SHOP NOW?
ANYWAY, IT'S ALREADY FALLEN OUT OF FAVOR.
THE INN THAT IS.
THIS PERSON, WHAT IS SHE PLANNING...
I KNOW, WHY DON'T WE BUILD AN APARTMENT THERE!
IT WILL BE VERY PROFITABLE!
THAT'S RIGHT, THAT'S RIGHT WE'LL MAKE IT AN APARTMENT BUILDING!
DON'T WORRY, HOMARE I KNOW YOU HAVE THOSE EMPLOYEES. I WILL TAKE GOOD CARE OF THEM
THIS IS ALL VERY TROUBLESOME FOR SAKI.
WHY DON'T WE EASE HER BURDEN?

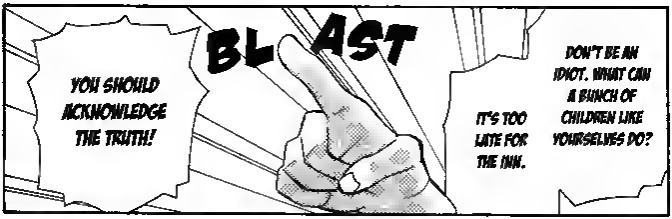
HO HO HO HO
AM I RIGHT?
THIS INN, THAT HAS BEEN PASSED DOWN THROUGH THE GENERATIONS, WILL COLLAPSE
AND ISN'T THAT WHAT YOUR MOTHER IS HEART-BROKEN OVER?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, DECIDING THIS ALL BY YOURSELF!
IT'S BECAUSE OF YOU.
WE'RE HERE HOMARE!!
FOUND YOU.
SFX: [lon] WHAM!

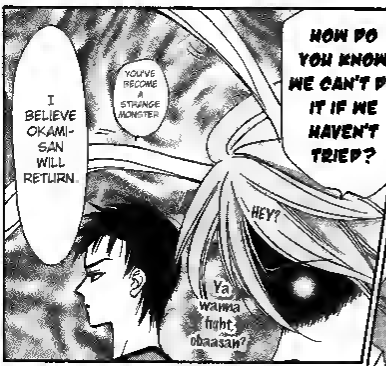
Shake
Shake
Shake
!
WHO'S THE OBAASAN ?

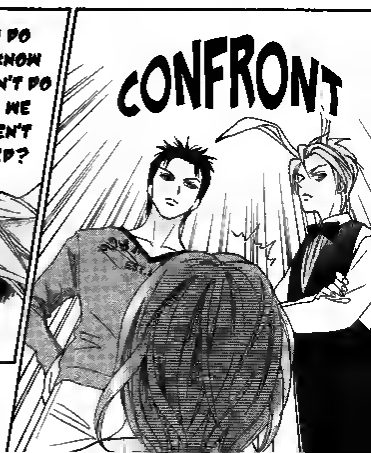
HOW DID YOU ... YOU GUYS !?
WE WERE WORRIED AND DECIDED TO COME
SAKI-NEE GAVE US THE ROOM NUMBER


YOU INVEST-IGATED?
//

YOU ...
Gulp
YOU ARE THOSE LIVE-IN WORK-ERS.


BLAST
YOU SHOULD ACKNOWLEDGE THE TRUTH!
IT'S TOO LATE FOR THE INN.
DON'T BE AN IDIOT. WHAT CAN A BUNCH OF CHILDREN LIKE YOURSELVES DO?


I BELIEVE OKAMI-SAN WILL RETURN.
YOU'VE BECOME A STRANGE MONSTER
HOW DO YOU KNOW WE CAN'T DO IT IF WE HAVEN'T TRIED?
HEY?
Ya wanna fight obaasan?


CONFRONT

WHAT HAPPENS TO IT, THOSE TWO WILL DECIDE.
THAT'S WHY WE NEED THE INN.
IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.
GOKURAKU!
THAT'S RIGHT. WE ARE THE ONES WHO WILL PROTECT OKAMI-SAN AND
NO ONE IS GOING TO LISTEN TO YOU.
THE ...

OWNER OF GOKURAKU IS HOMARE.

Cough

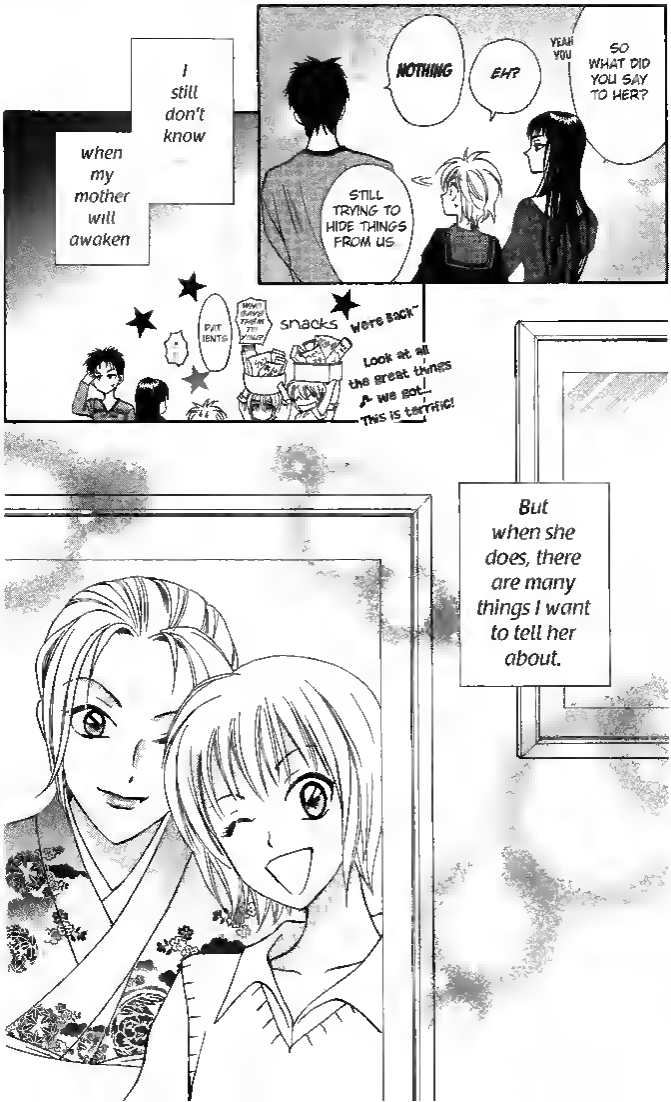
GREAT! WE RAN HER OFF.
YAY!!
Now that you know how strong we are, don't ever come back -!!
...
WELL...
OTO-CHAN
WE HEARD ALL ABOUT THIS FROM THE BOSS
IN THE FUTURE,
DON'T ALWAYS BE TRYING TO TAKE CARE OF IT ALL BY YOURSELF. IT'S A BAD HABIT.
.....
THANK YOU....
OH, SWEETS!!
WAIT, WE NEED TO GIVE THAT BACK TO HER -!!
Flowers
IF YOU WANT SOME TO EAT, BUY IT YOURSELF.
WHERE IS THE WATER?
AH, IT'S OVER HERE
CLACK

AH
.....
SHE SEEMS A LOT THINNER
THAN IN THE PHOTO-GRAPHS
HOMARE, SHE..

I WILL ALWAYS PROTECT HER.
...
ALSO,
.....
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS IN THE FUTURE,
HAS BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.
SO PLEASE HURRY AND WAKE UP, OKAMI-SAN.

WAS I MIS-TAKEN?
.....
AH!
TAKA-SHINA-KUN?
?
RATTLE
WE'RE BACK

EVERYTIME I VISIT, I WOULD HOLD HER HAND AND TALK TO HER BUT
IT DOES NOT SEEM TO HELP
.....
IT WOULD BE WONDERFUL IF SHE CAN HEAR US
SHE CAN HEAR US .. I'M SURE OF IT.
NO MATTER WHAT WE SAY,
SHE DEFINITELY CAN HEAR US I BELIEVE THIS
SHE CAN
.....
YEAH ...


I still don't know
when my mother will awaken
SO WHAT DID YOU SAY TO HER?
YEAH YOU
EH?
NOTHING
STILL TRYING TO HIDE THINGS FROM US
snacks
We're back~
Look at all the great things we got... This is terrific!
But when she does, there are many things I want to tell her about.

Credits

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Cleaner Genrou1

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#WAI@irc.irchighway.net

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